AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method of facilitating trading using a computer system, comprising:

executing, by a computer system, at least two market processes during an overlapping time interval, ~~on a computer system, at least two market processes having respective market methodologies,~~ wherein each of the at least two market processes ~~are computer software processes executing on the same computer system, and wherein each of the market processes~~ provides a distinct and separate market and ~~is configured to pair orders received from buying and selling trading processes for trading items specified in the orders,~~ implements a respective market methodology; [[and]]

~~executing, on the computer system, a~~ receiving, by a first of the at least two market processes executing on the computer system, a first order from a trader,

wherein the first order specifies one or more items for a trade and is available for pairing by the first market process, and

wherein, during the overlapping time interval, a second order from the trader is available for pairing by a second of the at least two market processes executing on the computer system, the second order specifying the same one or more items as specified in the first order;

during the overlapping time interval, conditionally pairing, by the first market process executing on the computer system, the first order with a contra-side order, wherein the pairing is conditional based on preventing the second order from being paired by the second market process;

sending, by the first market process, an instruction related to the first order to a representation process executing on the computer system, the instruction causing the representation process to respond thereto by sending to the second market process a corresponding instruction related to the conditional pairing of the first order;

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responsive to the corresponding instruction, preventing, by the second market process, a pairing of the second order that was available for pairing; and

responsive to preventing the pairing of the second order, completing, by the first market process, the pairing of the first order with the contra-side order that previously was conditionally paired by the first market process,

wherein the representation process [[that]] is configured to communicate with ~~the at least two~~ each of the market processes and provide a communication conduit between the at least two market processes for synchronizing processing of ~~an order~~ the orders that ~~is simultaneously~~ are available for ~~execution~~ pairing by the at least two market processes during the overlapping time interval~~,~~

~~wherein the buying and selling trading processes are computer software processes that are executing on the same computer system as the market processes, and~~

~~wherein a pairing of orders by one of the at least two market processes causes the one market process to send an instruction related to an order in the pairing to the representation process which responds thereto by sending a corresponding instruction related to the order to the other of the at least two market processes to prevent the order from simultaneously being paired by the other of the at least two market processes~~.

2. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein each market methodology is defined by setting parameters independently of the parameters set for other market processes.

3. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the market methodologies is different from another of the market methodologies.

4. (Withdrawn - currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least two market processes are configured to receive orders from trading processes that are executing

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on the computer system, and wherein each trading process has a trading methodology defined by setting parameters independently of the parameters set for other trading processes.

5. (Withdrawn - currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least two market processes are configured to receive orders from trading processes that are executing on the computer system, and wherein each trading process has a trading methodology, and at least one of the trading methodologies is different from another of the trading methodologies.

6. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein each of the market processes lacks custom code from a user of the respective market process.

7. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the market processes includes custom code from a user of the respective market process.

8. (Withdrawn - currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least two market processes are configured to receive orders from trading processes that are executing on the computer system, and wherein each of the trading processes lacks custom code from a user of the respective trading process.

9. (Withdrawn - currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least two market processes are configured to receive orders from trading processes that are executing on the computer system, and wherein at least one of the trading processes includes custom code from a user of the respective trading process.

10. (Withdrawn - currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least two market processes are configured to receive orders from trading processes that are executing on the computer system, each trading process implementing a respective trading methodology, wherein the market methodologies and the trading methodologies each incorporate a respective decision table having at least two rules specifying at least one of a discovery strategy and an

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order handling strategy, each rule having at least one condition and at least one action to be taken when the condition is satisfied.

11. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10, wherein the market methodologies and the trading methodologies each include automatically evaluating whether the at least one condition for each of the rules is satisfied, and for each of the rules having a satisfied condition, automatically configuring the respective process to act on the at least one action.

12. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10, wherein the at least one condition is based on order characteristics.

13. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10, wherein the at least one condition is based on market characteristics.

14. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13, wherein the decision table includes a holding tank for storing at least one order waiting for a market related event.

15. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10, wherein the automatically evaluating includes assigning a value to a parameter.

16. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10, wherein the automatically evaluating includes transferring to another rule.

17. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10, wherein at least one of the rules also specifies a time for acting on its at least one action.

18. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10, wherein the at least one action in at least one of the rules is a wait operation.

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19. (Withdrawn - currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least two market processes are configured to receive orders from trading processes that are executing on the computer system, and wherein each of the trading processes has a respective order routing strategy for automatically routing orders from the respective trading process to the at least two market processes.

20. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 19, wherein one of the orders from one of the trading processes is routed to at least two of the market processes.

21. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 19, wherein the automatically routing is in accordance with a relationship between the trading process and the market process.

22. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 21, wherein the relationship is represented by a code defined between the trading process and the market process.

23. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 19, wherein at least one of the market processes represents an informal market.

24. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 19, wherein the automatically routing is based on information internal to the trading processes.

25. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 19, wherein the automatically routing is based on information obtained from processes external to the trading processes for deciding how to automatically route.

26. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 25, wherein the external processes are informational processes.

27. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 25, wherein the external processes are market processes.

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28. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the market processes represents an informal market.

29. (Withdrawn - currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least two market processes are configured to receive orders from trading processes that are executing on the computer system, each trading process implementing a respective trading methodology, wherein each trading methodology includes a price discovery methodology and an action methodology.

30. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 29, wherein the discovery strategy is selected from at least two of (i) no external discovery, (ii) obtain posted prices, (iii) query the market process, and (iv) query an information provider.

31. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 30, wherein the posted prices are from market processes and are stored in a file accessible to all trading processes authorized by the market processes.

32. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 30, wherein the discovery strategy includes discovery from at least one informal market.

33. (Withdrawn - currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising automatically operating at least one data provider process on the computer system.

34. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 33, wherein the data provider process is for responding to a query.

35. (Withdrawn - currently amended) The method of claim 34, wherein the at least two market processes are configured to receive orders from trading processes that are executing on the computer system, and wherein the query is from one of the trading processes.

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36. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 33, wherein the data provider process is for broadcasting information.

37. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 36, wherein the information is broadcast to one of the market processes.

38. (Withdrawn - currently amended) The method of claim 36, wherein the at least two market processes are configured to receive orders from trading processes that are executing on the computer system, and wherein the information is broadcast to one of the trading processes.

39. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 38, wherein the data provider process checks access permission of the trading process prior to broadcasting information to the trading process.

40. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising automatically maintaining a market process status file on the computer, wherein the market process status file includes a status of each of the market processes.

41. (Previously presented) The method of claim 40, wherein the market process status file is accessible to at least one of the market processes.

42. (Currently amended) The method of claim 40, wherein the at least two market processes are configured to receive orders from trading processes that are executing on the computer system, and wherein the market process status file is accessible to at least one of the trading processes.

43. (Previously presented) The method of claim 42, further comprising checking an access permission for a trading process before providing the trading process with access to the market process status file.

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44. (Previously presented) The method of claim 40, further comprising automatically updating in the market process status file the status of at least one of the market processes that has changed its operational mode.

45. (Previously presented) The method of claim 44, wherein the operational mode is an in process mode in which the market process has priority over other market processes for executing a trade.

46. (Previously presented) The method of claim 44, wherein the operational mode is a fast symbol mode in which a trade is available for execution without regard to the status of the trade as represented in a different market provided by another of the market processes.

47. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, further comprising automatically maintaining a file including the status of orders represented at each of the market processes.

48. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 47, wherein the order status file is accessible to the market processes.

49. (Withdrawn - currently amended) The method of claim 47, wherein the at least two market processes are configured to receive orders from trading processes that are executing on the computer system, and wherein the order status file is accessible to the trading processes.

50. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 49, further comprising checking access permission for each of the trading processes before providing access to the order status file.

51. (Withdrawn - currently amended) The method of claim 47, wherein the at least two market processes are configured to receive orders from trading processes that are executing on the computer system, and wherein the order status file indicates which of the market and trading processes has control over the order.

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52. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 47, wherein the order status file indicates when an order is represented in multiple markets.

53. (Withdrawn - currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least two market processes are configured to receive orders from trading processes that are executing on the computer system, and wherein an order from one of the trading processes is represented in each of the at least two market processes, [[and]] the method further comprising automatically ensuring the order is executable in at most one of the first and second market processes.

54. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 53, wherein each of the at least two market processes operates according to a two phase action protocol, and the automatically ensuring includes obtaining permission to act from a controlling process.

55. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 54, wherein the permission is an affirmation to act upon a specified number of shares of the order.

56. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 54, wherein the controlling process is a trading process.

57. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 54, wherein the controlling process is a market process.

58. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 53, wherein one of the market processes is in fast symbol mode, and the automatically ensuring includes canceling the order from the fast symbol market process before executing in another of the market processes.

59. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 53, wherein the automatically ensuring includes determining whether the order is in process at another market process.

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60. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 59, wherein the order includes an order tail indicating the market processes in which it is represented.

61. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 53, wherein a platform process maintains a market file indicating the market processes in which an order is represented, and wherein the automatically ensuring includes checking the market file.

62. (Withdrawn - currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein one of the market processes is coupled to an external market, [[and]] the method further comprising:

automatically receiving an action from one of the coupled market process and the external market,

automatically transmitting the action to the other of the coupled market process and the external market, and

when a response has not been received within a predetermined time, automatically sending a zero action to the one of the coupled market process and the external market.

63. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 62, further comprising receiving a response after the predetermined time and sending a negative acknowledgement to the other of the coupled market process and the external market.

64. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 62, further comprising converting the received action to a converted action, and wherein the automatically transmitting transmits the converted action.

65. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 64, wherein the received action is an execute operation and the converted action is a cancel operation.

66. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 62, wherein the automatically receiving and transmitting are performed by a platform process.

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67. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

automatically receiving a timer request for a short term option expiration from one of the market processes, and

automatically setting a timer to indicate the short term option expiration time.

68. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 67, further comprising resetting the timer to ensure that the short term option remains valid.

69. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 67, further comprising sending a short term option expiration notice to the market process associated with the timer request.

70. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 67, wherein the timer request also includes identification of one of the trading processes, and further comprising sending a short term option expiration notice to the identified trading process.

71. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 67, further comprising creating a short term option manager process in response to the timer request.

72. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 67, wherein the automatically receiving and setting are performed by a platform process.

73. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

automatically receiving a list of orders, each order including an item and associated price and associated quantity,

automatically determining whether all of the orders on the list are executable at the respective prices, and

automatically deciding whether to execute all of the orders on the list based on the determination.

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74. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 73, wherein the list is associated with an objective function.

75. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 73, wherein at least one of the orders is a trial order.

76. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 73, wherein the automatically determining includes ensuring that there is an unexpired short term option associated with at least one order in the list.

77. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 76, further comprising overriding the expiration time of a short term option associated with at least one order in the list.

78. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 73, further comprising automatically executing all of the orders on the list when the determination is positive.

79. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 78, wherein the automatically executing includes notifying at least one of the market processes of a pairing.

80. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 78, further comprising automatically advising the source of the list of orders that the orders on the list have been executed.

81. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 78, wherein one of the orders in the pairing is obtained by exercising a previously granted short term option.

82. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 73, further comprising automatically advising the source of the list of orders that the orders on the list were not executed when the determination is negative.

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83. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 73, wherein the automatically receiving, determining and executing are performed by a platform process.

84. (Withdrawn - currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least two market processes are configured to receive orders from trading processes that are executing on the computer system, the method further comprising:

automatically capturing a trade between two of the trading processes, and

automatically updating a preference rating based on the trade.

85. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 84, wherein each pair of trading processes has a preference rating.

86. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 85, wherein the preference rating is two-sided, each of the sides corresponding to how one of the pair of trading processes rates the other of the pair of trading processes.

87. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 84, wherein the preference rating is based on at least one threshold.

88. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 87, wherein the at least one threshold is supplied by at least one of the trading processes.

89. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 84, wherein the preference rating is also based on information supplied by at least one of the trading processes.

90. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 89, wherein the information comprises a rule for determining the preference rating during the automatic updating.

91. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 89, wherein the information comprises a rating for the other of the trading processes.

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92. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 84, wherein one of the trading processes can designate itself as anonymous.

93. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 84, wherein the preference rating is used in determining whether to allow or prohibit a next trade between the trading processes.

94. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 84, wherein the preference rating is based on comparing the trade price with a metric.

95. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 94, wherein the metric is a market price at a time other than the time of the trade.

96. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 84, wherein the automatically updating occurs after the trade.

97. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 84, wherein the automatically updating occurs at a predetermined time.

98. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 84, wherein the automatically capturing and updating are performed by one of the market processes.

99. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 84, wherein the automatically capturing is performed by one of the market processes and the automatically updating is performed by a platform process.

100-108. (Canceled)

109. (Currently amended) A computer system for facilitating trading, comprising:

at least one processing component configured to execute[[,]] on the computer system at least two market processes during an overlapping time interval, ~~on the same computer system, at~~

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~~least two market processes, a buying trading process, and a selling trading process,~~ wherein each of the at least two market processes ~~have respective market methodologies and provide~~ provides a distinct and separate ~~markets and are configured to pair orders received from the buying and selling trading processes for trading items specified in the orders,~~ market and implements a respective market methodology; [[and]]

at least one processing component configured to receive, by a first of the at least two market processes executing on the computer system, a first order from a trader,

wherein the first order specifies one or more items for a trade and is available for pairing by the first market process, and

wherein, during the overlapping time interval, a second order from the trader is available for pairing by a second of the at least two market processes executing on the computer system, the second order specifying the same one or more items as specified in the first order;

at least one processing component configured to conditionally pair, by the first market process, the first order with a contra-side order during the overlapping time interval, wherein the pairing is conditional based on preventing the second order from being paired;

at least one processing component configured to send, by the first market process, an instruction related to the first order to a representation process executing on the computer system, the instruction causing the representation process to respond thereto by sending to the second market process a corresponding instruction related to the conditional pairing of the first order;

responsive to the corresponding instruction, at least one processing component configured to prevent, by the second market process, a pairing of the second order that was available for pairing; and

responsive to preventing the pairing of the second order, at least one processing component configured to complete, by the first market process, the pairing of the first order with the contra-side order that previously was conditionally paired by the first market process,

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~~at least one processing component configured to execute a~~ wherein the representation process [[that]] communicates with the at least two market processes and provides a communication conduit between the at least two market processes for synchronizing processing of ~~an order~~ the orders that ~~is simultaneously~~ are available for ~~execution~~ pairing by the at least two market processes during the overlapping time interval~~,~~

~~wherein the at least two market processes and the buying and selling trading processes are each computer software processes executing on the computer system, and wherein a pairing of orders by one of the at least two market processes causes the one market process to send an instruction related to an order in the pairing to the representation process which responds thereto by sending a corresponding instruction related to the order to the other of the at least two market processes to prevent the order from simultaneously being paired by the other of the at least two market processes~~.

110. (Currently amended) The system of claim 109, wherein at least one processing component is further configured to automatically maintain a market ~~processes~~ process status file that includes a status of each of the market processes.

111. (Previously presented) The system of claim 110, wherein the market process status file is accessible to at least one of the market processes.

112. (Currently amended) The system of claim 110, wherein the at least two market processes are configured to receive orders from trading processes that are executing on the computer system, and wherein the market process status file is accessible to at least one of the trading processes.

113. (Previously presented) The system of claim 112, wherein at least one processing component is further configured to check an access permission for a trading process before providing the trading process with access to the market process status file.

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114. (Previously presented) The system of claim 110, wherein at least one processing component is further configured to automatically update in the market process status file the status of at least one of the market processes that has changed its operational mode.

115. (Previously presented) The system of claim 114, wherein the operational mode is an in process mode in which the market process has priority over other market processes for executing a trade.

116. (Previously presented) The system of claim 114, wherein the operational mode is a fast symbol mode in which a trade is available for execution without regard to the status of the trade as represented in a different market provided by another of the market processes.

117. (Currently amended) A ~~tangible~~ non-transitory computer-accessible medium having executable instructions stored thereon for facilitating trading, wherein the instructions, ~~if executed~~ in response to execution, cause a computer to:

execute~~, during an overlapping time interval,~~ at least two market processes ~~having respective market methodologies~~ during an overlapping time interval, wherein each of the at least two market processes provides a distinct and separate market and ~~is configured to pair orders received from buying and selling trading processes for trading items specified in the orders,~~ implements a respective market methodology;

~~execute a~~ receive, by a first of the at least two market processes, a first order from a trader,

wherein the first order specifies one or more items for a trade and is available for pairing by the first market process, and

wherein, during the overlapping time interval, a second order from the trader is available for pairing by a second of the at least two market processes executing on the computer system, the second order specifying the same one or more items as specified in the first order;

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conditionally pair, by the first market process, the first order with a contra-side order during the overlapping time interval, wherein the pairing is conditional based on preventing the second order from being paired;

send, by the first market process, an instruction related to the first order to a representation process executing on the computer system, the instruction causing the representation process to respond thereto by sending to the second market process a corresponding instruction related to the conditional pairing of the first order;

responsive to the corresponding instruction, prevent, by the second market process, a pairing of the second order that was available for pairing; and

responsive to preventing the pairing of the second order, complete, by the first market process, the pairing of the first order with the contra-side order that previously was conditionally paired by the first market process,

wherein the representation process [[that]] is configured to communicate with ~~the at least two~~ each of the market processes and provide a communication conduit between the at least two market processes for synchronizing processing of ~~an order~~ the orders that ~~is simultaneously~~ are available for ~~execution~~ pairing by the at least two market processes during the overlapping time interval~~, and~~

~~execute at least a buying trading process and a selling trading process, wherein the buying and selling trading processes are able to trade with each other via the market processes according to the respective market methodologies, wherein the buying and selling trading processes execute on the same computer as the market processes, and~~

~~wherein a pairing of orders by one of the at least two market processes causes the one market process to send an instruction related to an order in the pairing to the representation process which responds thereto by sending a corresponding instruction related to the order to the other of the at least two market processes to prevent the order from simultaneously being paired by the other of the at least two market processes~~.

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118. (Currently amended) The computer-accessible medium of claim 117, further comprising executable instructions that, ~~if executed~~ in response to execution, cause the computer to automatically maintain a market process status file that includes a status of each of the market processes.

119. (Previously presented) The computer-accessible medium of claim 118, wherein the market process status file is accessible to at least one of the market processes.

120. (Currently amended) The computer-accessible medium of claim 118, wherein the at least two market processes are configured to receive orders from trading processes that are executing on the computer system, and wherein the market process status file is accessible to at least one of the trading processes.

121. (Currently amended) The computer-accessible medium of claim 120, further comprising executable instructions that, ~~if executed~~ in response to execution, cause the computer to check an access permission for a trading process before providing the trading process with access to the market process status file.

122. (Currently amended) The computer-accessible medium of claim 118, further comprising executable instructions that, ~~if executed~~ in response to execution, cause the computer to automatically update in the market process status file the status of at least one of the market processes that has changed its operational mode.

123. (Previously presented) The computer-accessible medium of claim 122, wherein the operational mode is an in process mode in which the market process has priority over other market processes for executing a trade.

124. (Previously presented) The computer-accessible medium of claim 122, wherein the operational mode is a fast symbol mode in which a trade is available for execution without

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regard to the status of the trade as represented in a different market provided by another of the market processes.

125. (Currently amended) A computer-implemented system for facilitating trading, comprising:

means for executing~~, during an overlapping time interval,~~ a first market process and a second market process during an overlapping time interval, wherein each of the first and second market processes provides a distinct and separate market and ~~each is configured to pair orders received from buying and selling trading processes for trading items specified in the orders, and~~ implements a respective market methodology;

means for ~~executing a~~ receiving, by a first of the at least two market processes, a first order from a trader, wherein the first order specifies one or more items for a trade and is available for pairing by the first market process, and wherein, during the overlapping time interval, a second order from the trader is available for pairing by a second of the at least two market processes, the second order specifying the same one or more items as specified in the first order;

means for conditionally pairing, by the first market process, the first order with a contra-side order during the overlapping time interval, wherein the pairing is conditional based on preventing the second order from being paired;

means for sending, by the first market process, an instruction related to the first order to a representation process executing on the computer system, the instruction causing the representation process to respond thereto by sending to the second market process a corresponding instruction related to the conditional pairing of the first order;

responsive to the corresponding instruction, means for preventing, by the second market process, a pairing of the second order that was available for pairing; and

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responsive to preventing the pairing of the second order, means for completing, by the first market process, the pairing of the first order with the contra-side order that previously was conditionally paired by the first market process,

wherein the representation process [[that]] communicates with the first and second market processes and provides a communication conduit between the first and second market processes for synchronizing processing of ~~an order~~ the orders that ~~is simultaneously~~ are available for execution by the first and second market processes during the overlapping time interval~~.~~

~~wherein a pairing of orders by the first or second market process causes the market process to send an instruction that is related to an order in the pairing to the representation process which responds thereto by sending a corresponding instruction related to the order to the other of the first or second market process to prevent the order from simultaneously being paired by the other of the first or second market process~~.

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